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I am unable to speak of the text of Mr. Williamson's work at the present time, but the collection of fifty-nine etchings with which he proposes to illustrate his book alone would be worth more than the price of the book to any fern student. I am delighted with them, and if the whole work is completed in the manner in which the etchings now in my possession indicate that it will be, then it cannot fail to prove a most valuable addition to our fern literature.

That the study of our native ferns is on the increase, and likely to become as popular as the same study is in England, where valuable and costly works on the subject have multiplied, the very gratifying success with which Prof. Eaton's splendid work on the "Ferns of North America" is meeting sufficiently indicates.

There is, therefore, ample room for such special hand books as Mr. Williamson's is intended to be, and I sincerely trust that the author will meet with a generous encouragement and success.—GEO. E. DAVENPORT.

SOUTHERN PLANTS.—Mr. A. H. Curtiss, of Jacksonville, Florida, proposes to issue sets of dried plants of the Southern United States, in installments or fascicles of 250 species each. Several sets of the first fascicle have been sent to us, and are deposited here, and one of them is now being added to this Herbarium. I wish to say that the specimens are so well selected, so ample and complete, so well named—all with full printed labels in neat form—that it is a pleasure to look at them, and that I consider them very cheap indeed at the price fixed, namely \$20 for 250 species.—ASA GRAY
Herbarium of Harvard University.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX TO NORTH AMERICAN BOTANY, by Sereno Watson. Part I. Polypetalæ.—This has long been a sadly needed work, and Mr. Watson has gone through an amount of necessary labor for the benefit of botanists for which we can never be too grateful. The Botany west of the Mississippi is especially scattered and very few have access to books that can enable them to trace up the authorities and synonymy of all of our western plants. This work meets the trouble exactly, brings together all these scattered references and enables the botanist of the humblest means to possess the names, synonymy and authorities of all the species of North American plants. To keep pace with the changes that are being made in names is important, and we would advise all of our contributors to send for the work at once and then some will find out that the names they sometimes send us have gone out of date long ago. The work is published by the Smithsonian Institution and the price is fixed at \$2.00 not half the cost. Copies can be had for that price by applying to Sereno Watson, Cambridge, Mass., Herbarium of Harvard University. The Polypetalæ of North America sum up as follows: Orders, 69; Genera, 545; Species, 3,038.

BOTANICAL CONTRIBUTIONS, by Asa Gray. This is No. 25 of these Contributions by Dr. Gray and we hope that the good work will go on for many years to come. It is divided into four parts. Part 1 is upon American *Elatine*s. Instead of a single species of *Elatine* it seems that we have four: *E. triandra*, Schkult., *E. Americana*, Arn., *E. brachysperma*, n. sp., and *E. Californica*, n. sp. Part 2 contains the descriptions of two new genera of *Acnuthaceæ*, named *Carlsonrightia* and *Gatesia*. The former is represented by two species, found in Texas and Arizona; the latter by one species which ranges from Northern Alabama and Southern Tennessee to Eastern Texas. Part 3 is devoted to the description of new *Astragal*i. We always expect a liberal share of this genus and we are not disappointed, for Dr. Gray here adds 17 new species. Part 4 contains "Miscellanæ," being a description of various new species. Dr. Parry describes a *Boykima*, and Dr. T. C. Porter, an *Actinella*, to which Dr. Gray adds a new species in each of the following genera: *Galium*, *Aster*, *Erigeron*, *Luphamia*, *Actinella*, and *Arnica*.